

MELISSA LEIGH GERLACH

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EXPERIENCED SALES, MARKETING AND KEY ACCOUNT MANAGEMENT PROFESSIONAL

A Record of Success Driving Growth in the Beer Industry in Multiple Roles and Diverse Markets

Highly-motivated, results-oriented sales & marketing leader with 20 years of experience successfully planning, developing and executing key sales, marketing, promotional, and pricing strategies to drive volume, distribution and market share growth. Adept at fostering and building cross-functional team relationships with wholesalers and retailers to drive incremental business. Excels at developing effective relationships and negotiating win-win solutions. Regarded as an exceptional leader and communicator who thrives on challenges and leads high-priority initiatives with a collaborative approach using strong interpersonal, planning, organization, and analytical skills.

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

**Sales & Marketing Strategy • Key Account Management • Sales District Leadership • Sales Route Execution
Promotions • Business Planning & Analysis • Pricing • Retail Execution • Wholesale Operations
Team Leadership & Motivation • Relationship Building • Customer Service • Six-Sigma White Belt Certified**

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Anheuser-Busch, Inc. (ABI)

1997 to Present

Retail Sales Director – Chicago, IL (Since 2017)

Manage business for Drug Channel accounts in total US

- Lead management of sales and marketing at the Rite Aid and Walgreens Drug Channel customers with business in 42 states and Puerto Rico with combined annual sales of over 17 million cases and \$318M. Grew share in total account base for 2017 business year.
- Manage, coach, and mentor a team of 5 Key Account Managers in execution of plans to increase ad activity, manage space management priorities, sell-in cooler resets, and work with multiple wholesalers on opportunities; evaluate strategies and develop action plans against opportunities for growth. Direct work with Category Management team in lieu of lost Category Director for team of 5.
- Build annual account plans/objectives, and prepare & present top level business reviews with senior chain and internal management for Joint Business plans. Manage large scale budgets for account plans and administrative needs.

Senior Key Account Manager - Boston, Massachusetts (Since 2009)

Promoted to develop business with major grocery/convenience chains in upstate NY, CT, NH, VT, MA, and ME.

- Led and managed business, promotions, distribution, innovation, sales, and pricing initiatives for Hannaford, Market Basket, Cumberland Farms, Big Apple, Hess, Tedeschi, Nouria Energy, Xtra-Mart, Big Y, Roche Bros., and Crosby's with combined annual sales of 6.1 million cases.
- Manage sales development and account execution initiatives for the beer category within assigned headquarters decision points utilizing information-based tactics to sell-in and implement channel-specific programs.
- Consistently achieve trend increases in sales volume for core and high-end portfolios.
- Contribute to the development and management of annual account plans/objectives, and prepare & present periodic top-to-top business reviews with senior chain management for a combined total of 230 store locations.
- Leverage sales & marketing experience, relationships, and expertise to design and implement strategies that enhance ABI's brand execution through category management, merchandising, promotion, and pricing strategies.
- Cultivate relationships with key wholesaler management and sales staff, A-B Region, and National Retail Sales and communicate relevant account details, and lead crisis management with Field Sales and Wholesaler personnel.

Key Account Manager, High-End Brands - Boston, Massachusetts (2008 to 2009)

Led sales and profitability growth initiatives for the portfolio of high-end brands.

- Managed strategic planning, development, communication and execution of marketing and promotional programs to support the SPIM brands for upstate New York and New England. Sold-in national and channel-specific initiatives, strategies, promotions, display, and distribution priorities.
- Built and cultivated effective relationships with off-premise chains including Hannaford, Market Basket, Tops, Wegman's, Rite-Aid, Hess, Shaws, Price Chopper and Wilson Farms. Utilized influence and negotiation skills to gain ad features and primary displays during key holiday periods. Worked closely with wholesaler and local field sales personnel to align ABI strategy, increase High-End visibility, and implement, manage, track execution, and evaluate results of pricing, distribution, and space initiatives.

Senior Business Analyst - Boston, Massachusetts (2007 to 2008)

Promoted and relocated to Region Office to provide analytical support and ad-hoc analysis to Region leadership team.

- Provided analytical support, reporting, and ad-hoc analysis to Northeast Region V.P. and Sales Directors to identify sales opportunities and wholesaler performance; developed action plans to address issues and recommend solutions.
- Assisted in development of the multi-state region strategic business and marketing plan laying the foundation to meet & exceed sales goal of 14.1 million barrels as well as revenue and profitability targets; monitored region P&L.

Senior Region Sales Manager - White Plains, New York (2005 to 2007)

Promoted and relocated to increase sales and market share by successfully strengthening wholesaler performance.

- Provided direction and leadership to 4 wholesalers in Metro New York to maximize brand awareness, distribution, sales, and market share growth in a territory consisting of 2,000+ retail accounts selling 8 million cases annually.
- Conducted regular market visits to communicate region priorities, identify sales opportunities, develop pricing plans and selling strategies, motivate wholesaler sales teams, and ensure compliance with the Wholesaler Equity Agreement.
- Analyzed the competitive price landscape in the market and implemented action plans to address competitive price and brand/package gaps; executed annual national price increase plans for all territory markets.
- Built relationships with key retail accounts, and adapted marketing strategies to address local dynamics.
- Coordinated efforts with Key Account and Geographic Marketing Managers to identify sales issues and opportunities.

Region Sales Manager - Raleigh, North Carolina (2003 to 2005)

Relocated to provide oversight, strategy, and leadership of local sales and distribution efforts.

- Managed key pricing, sales, marketing and distribution of A-B products working closely with 5 wholesalers in North Carolina selling 12 million cases of beer annually at 5,000+ on- and off-premise retail accounts.
- Conducted regular market visits to coach and motivate wholesaler sales team, and conduct annual wholesaler assessments to ensure compliance with Wholesaler Equity Agreement performance, and execution expectations.
- Analyzed sales, share, distribution, and pricing to uncover local market opportunities, managed the execution of national and regional marketing plans, and facilitated communication between wholesalers and Anheuser-Busch.

Region Sales Manager - Charleston, West Virginia (2001 to 2003)

Promoted and relocated to provide oversight, strategy, and leadership of local sales and distribution efforts.

- Performed similar duties as prior position in Raleigh, working closely with 8 wholesalers in Southern West Virginia selling 8 million cases of beer annually to 2,500 accounts in a high-share and high-priority college market.
- Completed competitive analysis, and assisted wholesalers in identifying sales, distribution, and merchandising opportunities; managed implementation of national, regional and local marketing and pricing plans.

Sales Representative - Montgomery County, Maryland (1999 to 2001)

Promoted to manage relationships and grow volume at on- and off-premise retail accounts.

- Executed the sales process for the entire A-B product portfolio at 100+ accounts, managing the unique complexities and requirements of the County-owned wholesale operations, and related retail account relationships.
- Developed and implemented specific account-level objectives, executed trade calls, merchandised accounts, developed and implemented promotional programming, and managed inventory, pricing, and sell through.

On-Premise Marketing Coordinator – Baltimore, MD and Washington, DC (1997 to 1999)

Primary stake holder with wholesalers and focused manager of On-premise marketing programs.

- Coordinated and supported all phases of national, regional, and local contemporary adult / brand marketing and promotional programs at key contemporary adult accounts, working with personnel in Virginia, Maryland and DC.
- Trained, coached, and mentored a team of 6 On-Premise Marketing Representatives on conducting On-premise promotions, trade calls, and merchandising activities, and successfully executing special events. Developed account relationships and supported Geographic Marketing efforts by developing and implementing local and national retail marketing plans in targeted high-profile accounts to increase brand presence and distribution.

EDUCATION & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**Bachelor of Science in Communications (1996)**

Towson State University – Baltimore, Maryland

Completed extensive company seminars/workshops and online training

Sales Leadership Management at the Olin Business School, , Selling Skills, Coaching Skills, Product Knowledge, Draught Basics, Hand Selling, District Manager, Category Management, Key Account Manager, Finance, Writing for Results, Negotiating, Presentation Skills, Pricing, Six-Sigma White Belt Certified and Extensive international travel background.